

In response to the Office Action of March 12, 2007, please amend the application as follows:

CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1,] 12, wherein the sulphuric acid-graphite particles are washed with an aqueous washing liquid, containing the at least one compound[s] affecting the expansion properties, to a pH ranging from 3 to 7.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1,] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains the at least one compound, affecting the expansion properties, in a concentration of 10^{-5} to 10 moles/L [and preferably of 10^{-4} to 1 mole/L].
5. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound increasing the expansion volume (%mg) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles, [at least one representative of the group comprising] a compound selected from the group consisting of Na_2SO_4 , K_2SO_4 , $[\text{MgSO}_4]$, CuSO_4 , ZnSO_4 , $\text{Al}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$, $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8$, NaBrO_3 , CH_3COONa , NaH_2PO_4 , sodium benzenesulfonate, trisodium naphthalenetrisulfonate, sodium 1-butanesulfonate, sodium 1-decanesulfonate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate, sodium toluenesulfonate, tetraethylammonium bromide, decyltrimethylammonium bromide, dodecyltrimethylammonium bromide, tetradecyltrimethylammonium bromide, octadecyltrimethylammonium chloride, sodium acetate, sodium propionate, sodium stearate, sodium oleate and sodium benzoate, in dissolved or dispersed form.
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound increasing the expansion rate (%/°C) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles in the onset region, [at least one representative of the group comprising] a compound selected from the group consisting of Na_2SO_4 , K_2SO_4 , $[\text{MgSO}_4]$, MnSO_4 , CuSO_4 , ZnSO_4 , $\text{Al}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$, $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8$, KMnO_4 , NaBrO_3 , $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$, NaNO_3 , NaH_2PO_4 , sodium benzenesulfonate, in a concentration of less than 0.0125 moles/L, sodium 1-butanesulfonate, sodium 1-decanesulfonate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate, sodium toluenesulfonate, tetraethylammonium bromide, dodecyltrimethylammonium bromide, octadecyltrimethylammonium chloride, sodium

acetate, sodium propionate, sodium stearate, sodium oleate and sodium benzoate, in dissolved or dispersed form.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound increasing the average expansion coefficient (per °K) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles, [at least one representative of the group] a compound selected from the group consisting of Na_2SO_4 , K_2SO_4 , $\{\text{MgSO}_4\}_4$ MnSO_4 , CuSO_4 , ZnSO_4 , $\text{Al}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$, $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8$, KMnO_4 , NaBrO_3 , $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$, NaNO_3 , NaH_2PO_4 , sodium benzenesulfonate, in a concentration of less than 0.0125 moles/L, sodium 1-butanesulfonate, sodium 1-decanesulfonate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate, sodium toluenesulfonate, tetraethylammonium bromide, dodecyltrimethylammonium bromide, octadecyltrimethylammonium chloride, sodium acetate, sodium propionate, sodium stearate, sodium oleate and sodium benzoate, in dissolved or dispersed form.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound, lowering the expansion rate (%/mg) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles [at least one representative of the group comprising] a compound selected from the group consisting of MnSO_4 , Fe_2SO_4 , KMnO_4 $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$, NaNO_3 , sodium naphthalenesulfonate, disodium 1,5-naphthalenesulfonate and sodium caprylate, in dissolved or dispersed form.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound lowering the expansion rate (%/°C) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles in the onset range, [at least one representative of the group comprising] a compound selected from the group consisting of FeSO_4 , sodium benzenesulfonate in a concentration of ≥ 0.0125 moles/L, decyltrimethylammonium bromide, tetradecyltrimethylammonium bromide, sodium naphthalenesulfonate, disodium 1,5-naphthalenedisulfonate, trisodium naphthalenetrisulfonate and sodium caprylate, in dissolved or dispersed form.

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 12, wherein the washing liquid contains as the at least one compound lowering the average expansion coefficient (per °K) of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles, [at least one representative of the group comprising] a compound selected from the group consisting of FeSO_4 , KMnO_4 , $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$, NaNO_3 , sodium naphthalenesulfonate, disodium 1,5-naphthalenedisulfonate, trisodium

naphthalenetrisulfonate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate and sodium caprylate, in dissolved or dispersed form.

11. (Original) Intumescent fire-retarding additives for producing fire-retarding compositions for sealing wall bushings and other openings in walls, floors and ceilings of buildings, comprising thermally expandable sulphuric acid-graphite particles, produced by the reaction of graphite particles with sulphuric acid in the presence of an oxidizing agent, washed with an aqueous washing liquid, containing the compounds affecting the expansion properties, to a pH ranging from 2 to 8 measured in the washing liquid separated from the washed sulphuric acid-graphite particles, and then dried.

12. (New) A method for controlling the expansion properties of thermally expandable sulphuric acid-graphite particle, which comprises washing the sulphuric acid-graphite particles produced by the reaction of graphite particles with sulphuric acid in the presence of an oxidizing agent with an aqueous washing liquid containing at least one compound affecting the expansion properties of the sulphuric acid-graphite particles selected from the group consisting of Na_2SO_4 , K_2SO_4 , MnSO_4 , CuSO_4 , ZnSO_4 , $\text{Al}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$, $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8$, KMnO_4 , NaBrO_3 , NaNO_3 , NaH_2PO_4 , sodium benzenesulfonate, trisodium naphthalenetrisulfonate, sodium 1-butanedisulfonate, sodium 1-decanedisulfonate, sodium dodecylbenzenedisulfonate, sodium toluenesulfonate, tetraethylammonium bromide, decyltrimethylammonium bromide, dodecyltrimethylammonium bromide, tetradecyltrimethylammonium bromide, octadecyltrimethylammonium chloride, sodium acetate, sodium propionate, sodium stearate, sodium oleate and sodium benzoate, in dissolved or dispersed form, to a pH ranging from 2 to 8, said pH being measured in the washing liquid, separating the washed sulfuric acid-graphite particles from the washing liquid, and then drying the sulphuric acid-graphite particles.

13. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the washing liquid contains the at least one compound, affecting the expansion properties, in a concentration of 10^{-4} to 1 mole/L.

IN THE DRAWINGS

Please delete Fig. 1 and insert the enclosed replacement Figure